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Motion might stymie Ron Rewald's 'CIA defense'

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Ronald Rewald's "CIA defense" would be eliminated from his Aug. 5 trial if the prosecution has its way, documents filed in federal court indicate.

Federal prosecutors have filed a motion to remove from Rewald's trial next month the four charges of perjury brought against him by a grand jury last August. That would leave Rewald facing 94 charges of fraud, securities violations and income tax evasion.

Federal Judge Harold S. Fong has said Rewald is entitled to information relating to the CIA to defend himself against the perjury charges, because his alleged false statements are his claims that the CIA set up and ran his company.

But if the perjury charges are separated from the rest, to be tried at a later date, it is an open question how much — if any — CIA material Rewald could introduce in his defense to the fraud, tax and securities charges.

One of Rewald's defense attorneys, Assistant Federal Public Defender Brian Tamanaha, said yesterday the government's strategy appears to be to try to "keep out as much classified information as possible." Tamanaha said the defense does not agree with the government that CIA-related material becomes irrelevant if the perjury charges are not included.

"The judge has said that if Rewald's allegations about the

CIA are true, they provide several of the defenses Rewald is asserting," Tamanaha said.

The government's motion to separate the perjury charges was filed under seal, not available to the public, on grounds that it included some classified information.

Rewald's attorneys charge that there is no reason to classify the motion secret, and that to do so "is obviously an attempt to violate the defendant's Sixth Amendment right to a public trial."

Assistant U.S. Attorney John Peyton said the government has since sought to file a slightly changed version of the motion in open court. Visiting federal District Judge Spencer Williams is expected to consider that request today.

The kinds of things that might be kept out of the trial by a narrow ruling on relevance of CIA matters was indicated yesterday when Tamanaha filed a motion seeking from the government evidence that he said tends to clear Rewald.

The lawyer asked the government to disclose all it knows about a meeting between one-time Rewald company secretary Jackie Vos and Honolulu businessman Robert C. Allen following Rewald's 1983 suicide attempt and the collapse of the company, Bishop Baldwin Rewald Dillingham & Wong.

Tamanaha says Rewald believes Allen asked Vos for company records so he could review them for the CIA. Allen

denies that.

Vos claimed in a statement filed in court by Rewald's lawyers yesterday that Allen told her Rewald was "laundering dirty money" and that he had threatened Rewald if he didn't "quit his lifestyle and make the investments that we told him to make."

Vos claimed Allen and another man, an Angelo Cancel, asked her to find a "green book" that Tamanaha now says is known to contain a complete listing of the foreign bank accounts used by Bishop Baldwin.

Allen last night denied Vos' version of the meeting, and said he knew Rewald only through polo and an effort to help a mutual friend, retired Air Force Gen. Hunter Harris, with a medical problem.

He said he had asked Vos about some of Harris' records, agreed to hold some documents she was worried about, and sent the documents to Rewald's attorneys a few days later.